

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 1585, NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2008

SPEECH OF

**HON. THOMAS H. ALLEN**

OF MAINE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, May 16, 2007*

Mr. ALLEN. Mr. Chairman, the amendment I offer today seeks to bring hope from tragedy. CAP Patrick Damon, who lived in Falmouth, ME, with his wife and two children, was a loyal public servant, both in State government and in the Maine National Guard.

In early 2006, Captain Damon was deployed with the Maine Guard's 240th Engineer Group to Afghanistan. On June 15 of that year, Patrick collapsed in his bunk after a run. Initial reports were that he died of a heart attack, even though he had no previous or family history of heart problems.

Captain Damon's mother, Barbara Damon-Day, has been persistent in seeking to get more information from the Army about the cause of her son's death. The Army lists the death as "sudden unexpected," and the exact cause remains inconclusive.

Based on her own investigation, Ms. Damon-Day believes her son's death was brought about by an adverse reaction to multiple vaccinations in a 24-hour period. Her investigation has revealed a lack of clarity in the Defense Department's guidelines and regulations on administering multiple vaccinations in a 24-hour period.

My amendment seeks to focus needed attention on this issue. It requires the Defense Department to report to Congress on its policies on administering and evaluating multiple vaccinations within a 24-hour period to members of the Armed Forces, including the Guard and Reserve. It requires information on whether the department's policies conform to the regulations and guidelines of federal health agencies.

The amendment also requests data on the number of deaths that have been investigated for vaccines-related causes, and information on how medical records are shared with the Adjutant General of the states.

Finally, the amendment requires the Department to perform a study on the safety and effectiveness of administering multiple vaccines with a 24-hour period to service personnel.

Since her son's death in June 2006, Mrs. Damon-Day has worked tirelessly to improve the Defense Department's medical screening of Armed Forces prior to their deployment overseas. The Maine Legislature is currently considering legislation to create a commission to improve medical screening of Maine Guard personnel before they go overseas.

Barbara Damon-Day has honored her son's memory by making it her mission to improve the health screenings given our military, and to improve the information they receive, before they leave to serve on our behalf in Afghanistan, Iraq and around the globe. We owe her our gratitude for her efforts and our support to help advance her cause. I hope that my amendment can play a part in that mission.

I urge support for the Allen amendment.

TRIBUTE TO THE OLATHE NORTHWEST HIGH SCHOOL RAVONICS REVOLUTION ROBOTICS TEAM UPON THEIR PARTICIPATION IN THE 'FIRST ROBOTICS' NATIONAL COMPETITION

**HON. DENNIS MOORE**

OF KANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, May 17, 2007*

Mr. MOORE of Kansas. Madam Speaker, I am pleased to have this opportunity today to recognize the Ravonics Revolution robotics team from Olathe Northwest High School in Olathe, KS. The Ravonics Revolution team was one of over 1,100 schools across the country to participate in the 2007 FIRST Robotics competition, and were so successful that they were named Midwest Regional Champions.

FIRST Robotics, which was founded by Dean Kamen, the inventor of the Segway, is creating programs where kids can compete in sports-like environments, using math/engineering/technology/science skills rather than traditional athletic skills. The organization's vision is: "To create a world where science and technology are celebrated . . . where young people dream of becoming science and technology heroes."

Olathe Northwest High School formed their FIRST Robotics team two years ago and has been led by Sue Rippe, a Kansas Teacher of the Year in 2000. Sue and her husband, Cliff, have dedicated themselves to this program, providing guidance and support, but the kids are the real leaders of the team. They appointed a CEO, COO, CIO, CFO and other leaders within their group to divide responsibilities.

The team raised their own money to attend competition—more than \$38,000 this year—and obtained sponsorships from over 25 companies and individuals. And, their hard work and dedication has not gone unnoticed. In addition to winning their regional championship in Chicago, IL, earlier this year, they won other awards in entrepreneurship, website design, video production and safety. They were further recognized at the championship event in Atlanta, GA, with the Autodesk Visualization Award for Best Lighting (CG Animation).

Success isn't enough for them, however, which is why they will be hosting a robot scrimmage this summer for all area teams to encourage more students and schools to join the FIRST Robotics league.

Thanks to their teacher, Sue Rippe, the leadership of the Olathe school district and the FIRST Robotics organization, these students are able to focus on subjects they enjoy and on what they're good at. The program not only allows kids to be surrounded with teachers and classes that help to build on their strengths, but it also brings together kids with like interests so that they can learn from each other and develop their leadership and teamwork skills.

A very wise man once said that the really fundamental debts, like the ones that students owe to their teachers and parents, can't be paid back. They are too big for that. They can only be paid forward to those who will come after us. I know that each of these students

will find a way to "pay forward" the debt they owe by using their amazing talents to help explore worlds and ideas we never thought possible.

Madam Speaker, the Ravonics Revolution team at Olathe Northwest High School is an example of what happens when students work together to create a highly talented, focused team and seek to achieve a goal greater than themselves. I join the residents of the entire Third Congressional District of Kansas in applauding the Olathe Northwest High School Ravonics Revolution team for their success in the 2007 FIRST Robotics competition and look forward to their continued success in all future endeavors.

IN HONOR OF THE CENTENNIAL ANNIVERSARY OF THE EAST END NEIGHBORHOOD HOUSE

**HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH**

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, May 17, 2007*

Mr. KUCINICH. Madam Speaker, I rise today in honor and recognition of the East End Neighborhood House, EENH, whose leaders, staff and volunteers have uplifted and energized all aspects of Cleveland's urban neighborhoods for 100 years.

In 1907, Miss Hedwig Kosbab formed the EENH in her mother's home as a place that offered sewing classes for immigrant women. As the classes quickly began expanding to include others, the location of EENH changed several times but found its final home on the Van Sweringen estate in 1916.

Beyond providing services to residents on an individual level and six major programs for those young and old, the EENH nurtures community pride and identity while assisting individuals in uniting to identify and resolve its issues collectively. As public needs change, EENH redirects its efforts to focus on the eroding areas of community influence and life such as church, family and schools. Their efforts and services help to maintain stability in those areas and provide the lacking influence that is necessary for neighborhood prosperity, especially for children. One program provided by the EENH is the Cleveland Foster Grandparent Program, which brings neighborhood seniors and youth together. The unification of these two generations allows elders to continue to contribute by leading and sharing wisdom with the young people of the community, while providing the youth with the support and guidance that they need to become active members of the community as well.

Madam Speaker and colleagues, please join me in honor and recognition of the volunteers, staff and leaders, past and present, of the East End Neighborhood House. Their collective dedication, vision, volunteerism and work on behalf of all residents has served to preserve the historic integrity and pride of the neighborhood, promote community accord and maintain a healthy sense of neighborhood unity for residents, young and old.

TRIBUTE TO THE RECENT ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF THE DURANGO HIGH SCHOOL AEROSPACE DESIGN TEAM

**HON. MARK UDALL**

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, May 17, 2007*

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Madam Speaker, I rise today in order to congratulate the Durango High School Aerospace Design Team for their recent selection as finalists in the International Space Settlement Design Competition. As one of only eight teams chosen worldwide—and only three from the United States—the Durango High School team represents the best that our public education system has to offer.

The International Space Settlement Design Competition is a serious endeavor, incorporating elements of engineering, logistics, creativity, business sense, and scientific acumen into a grand proposal where the competitors design a future habitat for humans on another planetary body. Students are held to rigorous standards; scientific concepts must be realistic extensions of current technologies and proposals are expected to provide budgetary details as well as specificities on how humans would live in the proposed settlement. The winning results are proposals that one would expect to see decades in the future, and are judged by engineers with expertise in the relevant fields.

As chairman of the Space and Aeronautics Subcommittee of the House Science and Technology Committee and a co-chair of the House Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) Education Caucus, I have a deep appreciation of what the Durango team has accomplished. I have long advocated the inclusion of a rigorous science program in our public education system and I applaud the results of Durango High School's emphasis on science education. Their success is a consequence of their strong education in the hard sciences and I am sure that these students will help ensure a better future for our Nation.

The Durango High School Aerospace Design Team will soon be competing against the rest of the finalists at the NASA Johnson Space Center in Houston, Texas. I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating the team on its success so far and to wish them the best of luck in the next and final leg of the competition.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

**HON. JEFF MILLER**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, May 17, 2007*

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Madam Speaker, I missed rollcall vote Nos. 350 through 366 on May 16, 2007. I was down in my district attending the funeral of Staff Sgt. Timothy P. Padgett.

I would have voted:

Rollcall vote No. 350, Motion to Adjourn, "aye"; rollcall vote No. 351, Previous Question on Rule for H.R. 1585—National Defense Authorization Act for FY '08, "nay"; rollcall vote

No. 352, Rule providing for H.R. 1585—National Defense Authorization Act for FY '08, "nay"; rollcall vote No. 353, Motion to Adjourn, "aye"; rollcall vote No. 354, Quorum Call, "present"; rollcall vote No. 355, Motion to Rise, "aye"; rollcall vote No. 356, Quorum Call, "present"; rollcall vote No. 357, Motion to Rise, "aye"; rollcall vote No. 358, Quorum Call, "present"; rollcall vote No. 359, Motion to Rise, "aye"; rollcall vote No. 360, Quorum Call, "present"; rollcall vote No. 361, Motion to Rise, "aye"; rollcall vote No. 362, Quorum Call, "present"; rollcall vote No. 363, Motion to Rise, "aye"; rollcall vote No. 364, Andrews Amendment to Defense Authorization to prevent funds authorized in the bill for the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan from being obligated or expended to plan a contingency operation in Iran, "nay"; rollcall vote No. 365, DeFazio Amendment to Defense Authorization to clarify that no previously enacted law authorizes military action against Iran, "nay"; rollcall vote No. 366, Woolsey Amendment to Defense Authorization to require the Secretary of Defense to issue a report on the continued use, need, relevance, and cost of weapons systems designed to fight the Cold War and the former Soviet Union, "nay".

INTRODUCING THE PARENTAL CONSENT ACT

**HON. RON PAUL**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, May 17, 2007*

Mr. PAUL. Madam Speaker, I rise to introduce the Parental Consent Act. This bill forbids Federal funds from being used for any universal or mandatory mental health screening of students without the express, written, voluntary, informed consent of their parents or legal guardian. This bill protects the fundamental right of parents to direct and control the upbringing and education of their children.

The New Freedom Commission on Mental Health has recommended that the Federal and State governments work toward the implementation of a comprehensive system of mental health screening for all Americans. The commission recommends that universal or mandatory mental health screening first be implemented in public schools as a prelude to expanding it to the general public. However, neither the commission's report nor any related mental health screening proposal requires parental consent before a child is subjected to mental health screening. Federally-funded universal or mandatory mental health screening in schools without parental consent could lead to labeling more children as "ADD" or "hyperactive" and thus force more children to take psychotropic drugs, such as Ritalin, against their parents' wishes.

Already, too many children are suffering from being prescribed psychotropic drugs for nothing more than children's typical rambunctious behavior. According to Medco Health Solutions, more than 2.2 million children are receiving more than one psychotropic drug at one time. In fact, according to Medco Trends, in 2003, total spending on psychiatric drugs for children exceeded spending on antibiotics or asthma medication.

Many children have suffered harmful side effects from using psychotropic drugs. Some

of the possible side effects include mania, violence, dependence, and weight gain. Yet, parents are already being threatened with child abuse charges if they resist efforts to drug their children. Imagine how much easier it will be to drug children against their parents' wishes if a Federally-funded mental health screener makes the recommendation.

Universal or mandatory mental health screening could also provide a justification for stigmatizing children from families that support traditional values. Even the authors of mental health diagnosis manuals admit that mental health diagnoses are subjective and based on social constructions. Therefore, it is all too easy for a psychiatrist to label a person's disagreement with the psychiatrist's political beliefs a mental disorder. For example, a Federally-funded school violence prevention program lists "intolerance" as a mental problem that may lead to school violence. Because "intolerance" is often a code word for believing in traditional values, children who share their parents' values could be labeled as having mental problems and a risk of causing violence. If the mandatory mental health screening program applies to adults, everyone who believes in traditional values could have his or her beliefs stigmatized as a sign of a mental disorder. Taxpayer dollars should not support programs that may label those who adhere to traditional values as having a "mental disorder."

Madam Speaker, universal or mandatory mental health screening threatens to undermine parents' right to raise their children as the parents see fit. Forced mental health screening could also endanger the health of children by leading to more children being improperly placed on psychotropic drugs, such as Ritalin, or stigmatized as "mentally ill" or a risk of causing violence because they adhere to traditional values. Congress has a responsibility to the Nation's parents and children to stop this from happening. I, therefore, urge my colleagues to cosponsor the Parental Consent Act.

HONORING THE NATURE CONSERVANCY OF ILLINOIS ON THEIR 50TH ANNIVERSARY

**HON. RAY LAHOOD**

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, May 17, 2007*

Mr. LAHOOD. Madam Speaker, I rise today to voice congratulations to The Nature Conservancy of Illinois in honor of its 50th Anniversary, and for the outstanding conservation work it has accomplished in Illinois. Since its establishment in 1957, The Nature Conservancy of Illinois has acquired, restored and preserved nearly 80,000 acres of natural lands at 120 sites throughout the entire State for the benefit of Illinois citizens.

The Nature Conservancy is a leading conservation organization, with more than 35,000 members in the State of Illinois and nearly one million members around the world working to protect ecologically important lands and waters for nature and people. For the past 50 years The Nature Conservancy in Illinois has been an effective, innovative partner in conservation with local, State, and Federal public land management agencies, other conservation not for profit organizations, corporations,